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INFO RUEHZL/EUROPEAN POLITICA COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/07/2018
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [GR](#) [LO](#) [KV](#) [YI](#)
SUBJECT: SLOVAKIA PM FICO VISITS ATHENS/KOSOVO ON THE AGENDA

Classified By: A/Political Counselor Jeff Hovenier for 1.4 (b) and (d)

11. (SBU) Slovak PM Robert Fico paid a one-day visit to Athens March 3, meeting with President Papoulias, PM Karamanlis, and Foreign Minister Bakoyannis. According to Greek MFA officials, this visit had been planned for "several months."

12. (U) In public statements, the two PMs said they had discussed economic relations, how to increase bilateral tourism, potential defense industry cooperation, and Kosovo.

13. (C) Fico's comments following his meeting with Karamanlis to the effect that Kosovo's declaration of independence was "a violation of international law that could spark a chain reaction," received wide coverage. PM Karamanlis' diplomatic advisor Marina Skordeli told us that Fico had pressed Karamanlis on the question of recognition of Kosovo. Fico told Karamanlis that Slovakia will "never recognize" an independent Kosovo. According to Skordeli, Karamanlis was more circumspect on the issue, as he recognizes that "Greek recognition must occur sometime, but not right now." In his joint press availability with Fico, Karamanlis emphasized that Greece will decide on recognition without "haste and pressure."
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